

Deborah A. Szaro

(b) (6)



Summary of Skills

- 29 years of demonstrated success leading people, programs, projects, and organizations,
- Entrepreneurial ability to initiate new programs, such as successful Citizen Science Program and Caribbean Science Consortium,
- Effective change agent, revamping programs, projects, and organizations in the federal government, academia, and private industry,
- Skill in networking at all organizational levels within and outside the federal government to achieve success with partners and stakeholders, including other EPA Regions, OSWER, OAR, OW, OECA, OARM, ORD, OEI, DoD, DOE, DOI, States/Tribes, local governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, and private industry,
- Extensive experience managing multi-disciplinary staff while directing scientific programs,
- Ability to inspire and motivate staff, leading by example, and
- Proven track record of superior performance in leadership, management and innovation, having received 37 national and regional performance awards during 26 year tenure with EPA, including 2 SES Bonuses, 1 SES Superior Accomplishment Award, 2 Gold Medals for Exceptional Service, 4 Bronze Medals for Commendable Service, and a Mentor of the Year Award.

Professional Experience

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2, Edison, NJ

Director, Division of Environmental Science and Assessment, 10/08 to Present

(Acting from 10/08-3/10)

Responsibilities: Serves as the Senior Federal Official for EPA's two hundred acre World War I era facility located in Edison, NJ. Responsible for over 400 federal, contractor and grantee staff from EPA Region 2, OSWER, ORD, OECA, the General Services Administration, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Public Health Service. Edison has an annual maintenance budget of \$3.5 million and is the COOP site for Region 2's New York Office and the backup COOP site for Region 3. Manages a Division of 70 federal, 15 contractor, and 3 grantee positions, comprised of mostly professional staff (chemists, biologists, engineers and environmental scientists). Manages equipment and an annual operating budget totaling \$10 million. Leads the Region's science and quality assurance programs.

Accomplishments:

- **Technical Services:** Directs the collection, analysis, and evaluation of environmental data in support of regional and national compliance monitoring and ambient monitoring programs. Conducts special studies, investigations and surveys to support regional enforcement actions or to define and resolve environmental problems.
 - Recent projects include groundbreaking work on PCBs in Schools, New Jersey's Combined Sewer Overflows, and the landmark Tonawanda Coke litigation victory,
 - Provides technical support to Regional initiatives on climate change, green infrastructure, and sustainability,
 - Manages the Water Quality Monitoring and Air Quality Monitoring Programs with

States/Tribes, BEACH Act grants, and the Floatables Program, and

- Provides field investigation, laboratory analysis, ecological risk, quality assurance, and data interpretation support for all Regional efforts under CERCLA, RCRA, CWA, CAA, FIFRA, TSCA, etc.
- **Hurricane Sandy:** Served as key RICT member during Hurricane Sandy response. Provided critical field sampling, laboratory analysis, quality assurance and data interpretation support, while dealing with destroyed homes and businesses, major power outages, gas shortages and spotty and non-existent phone coverage. Oversaw managers and staff serving as Environmental Unit Leaders, collecting field samples under dangerous conditions and performing microbiological analyses in a lab running only on limited emergency generator power. Leveraged our Emergency Lab Network to obtain other critical sample analyses. Interpreted data and provided language for press releases and reports to the HQ Emergency Operations Center.
- **Post- Super Storm Sandy:** Obtained \$600K and initiated performance of a post-Super Storm Sandy Monitoring Program to identify the short- and long-term impacts of the hurricane on the sediments and macroinvertebrates in NY/NJ Harbor complex, the impacts from raw sewage bypasses from damaged treatment plants, and the impacts on macroinvertebrates in selected NJ Water Management Areas.
- **Citizen Science:** Created the first-ever EPA Citizen Science Program to protect children's health and advance environmental justice. Convened stakeholders to ascertain their needs, leveraged cross-divisional resources, provided Hometown Grant funding to jump start the program, prioritized additional discretionary grant funding, and hosted 2 Citizen Science (CS) Workshops in NY and NJ. Workshops brought together over 250 personnel from government, academia, NGOs, and community groups and led to crucial next steps in developing outreach, guidance and training materials. Of particular note, developed first-ever EPA video on CS victory in Tonawanda, NY, which was showcased on EPA's YouTube site. Created streamlined guidance and provided on-site training classes on producing credible data. To further empower communities, provided webinar training on use of My Environment to identify localized facilities and existing monitoring data sets.
- **Caribbean Science Consortium:** Created Caribbean Science Consortium to leverage limited resources, expand science communication and collaboration, and address critical public health issues in environmental justice communities. Consortium includes government and university organizations in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, including a Hispanic Serving Institution and a Minority Academic Institution. To date, have addressed drinking water quality for 250 homes in Caño Martín Peña, pesticide contamination in homes as part of a Region 2/Centers for Disease Control National Children's Health Study, and drinking water quality for homes not served by public drinking water systems.
- **Strategic Planning:** Initiated and completed division-wide succession management and investment/disinvestment exercise to streamline operations, cross-train staff, and proactively realign our work efforts with the Agency's/Region's strategic needs while dealing with the expected dire budget situation. Obtained universal Senior Leadership Team acceptance of the investments/disinvestments.
- **Superfund Rebudgeting Initiative:** Co-chaired the national OSWER Analytical Services Advisory Committee, obtained agreement with OSWER and all 10 Regions on laboratory funding allocation model, identified procedural changes to effect millions of dollars in cost savings, and secured \$750K back from OSWER to be added into the Regional budgets.
- **Strategic Sourcing:** Established and staffed tri-chair position for national Strategic Sourcing Program to efficiently and cost-effectively purchase laboratory supplies across all 30+ EPA laboratories. Obtained 100% small business credit for all purchases and cost savings of 20% nationally. Program has saved \$1M per year.

- **Sustainability:** Led successful “getting to green” effort with managers and staff in the Edison Environmental Center to improve our Environmental Management System and Occupational Safety and Health programs. Spearheaded an initiative with OSWER’s Environmental Response Team to consolidate and reduce the number of old laboratory and office trailers.
- **Innovative Technology:** Partnering with NJDEP and local governments, led development and implementation of innovative DNA testing to provide beach monitoring results to the public in 2-3 hours versus 24 hours with conventional technology, and held two press events celebrating success. Also obtained funding and partnered with NJDEP and Rutgers to develop and implement an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (aka glider) to obtain continuous ocean water quality data.
- **Employee Engagement and Morale:** Within my Division, instituted changes to improve employee engagement and morale including one-on-one meetings and brown bag lunches with the Director, quarterly all hands meetings, routine walkabouts to check-in with staff, Division Director Shadowing Program, New Employees Workgroup with mentorship by the Director, establishment of acting manager and cross-training opportunities, and Director-sponsored social events. Mentors numerous managers and staff in other divisions and successfully coached 4 teams in our Region’s new Leadership Development Program on my projects relating to onboarding new employees, mid-career development, succession management, and improving collaboration/communication.
- **Labor/Management:** Served as management representative to negotiate cost savings proposals related to sequestration and furloughs with the Union and to negotiate participation of lower grade employees in Leadership Development Program. Provided management representative to negotiate Maxiflex proposal with the Union.
- **Programs to Support People with Disabilities:** Developed successful partnership with JFK Johnson Vocational Rehabilitation Program to assist adults with special needs by providing them skills to work in a Laboratory environment. Continues to provide Agency representation on their Interface Advisory Board, participate in Annual Career Day, provide student internships and participate in Technical Mock Interviews for graduating class members.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2, Edison, NJ

Laboratory Branch Chief, 5/02 to 10/08

Responsibilities: Manager of 20 federal employees and 1 grantee, including laboratory scientists, administrative staff, two first-line supervisors and a contractor project officer. Oversaw 10 contractor positions. Directed a multi-million dollar laboratory responsible for producing high quality data and providing technical support to meet the needs of varied environmental programs under federal and state statutes, including CERCLA, RCRA, CWA, CAA, TSCA, and FIFRA. Directed an annual operating budget of \$2.1 million.

Accomplishments:

- Developed a hands-on Applied Science Program with Edison Township High Schools to positively promote science careers in environmental justice communities, and held a press event recognizing the program’s impact and success,
- Served as Labor Management Partnership Council Co-chair for the development of a Region-wide Mini-Details Program for staff to cross-train in other programs and organizations in support of career development and succession management,
- Implemented numerous laboratory improvement efforts to better market laboratory services and utilize limited resources:
 - Achieved on-the-spot accreditation by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program,
 - Improved productivity of federal staff by 78% and contractor staff by 192%,
 - Reduced time for delivery of work products by 37% for federal staff and 11% for contractor

- staff,
- Expanded scope of services offered by contractor by 50% to better meet customer needs,
- Developed marketing strategy and instituted customer satisfaction survey postcards, maintaining a superior rating in planning, timeliness, quality and communication since initiation,
- Renovated 9 laboratories in a World War I era facility saving 1700 million BTUs/year, 18,000 kW hours/year, and \$39,000/year through the purchase and installation of energy efficient equipment,
- Revamped current laboratory methods and introduced innovative methods to reduce solvent usage and hazardous waste generation, saving \$103,000/year,
- Re-competed equipment maintenance contracts, saving \$42,000/year, and
- Created an Emergency Laboratory Network to leverage the capability and capacity of the Region and its State partners to respond to a terrorist event or natural disaster; developed a Drinking Water Emergency Laboratory Response Plan; and implemented a Table Top Exercise and a Functional Exercise to maintain readiness of network partners.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, N. Chelmsford, MA

Quality System Team Leader, 9/97 to 5/02

Responsibilities: Team Leader, directing three multi-disciplinary teams composed of a diverse staff of 17 chemists, environmental scientists, engineers, specialists, and support personnel. Responsible for developing and managing the Regional Quality System to ensure the generation of quality data for decision-making. Advised EPA managers and staff; other federal agencies; state, local and tribal partners; and other stakeholders in the generation, reporting, and use of environmental data to meet program needs.

Accomplishments:

- Partnered with U.S. Departments of Defense, Energy and Interior to standardize Superfund quality requirements for environmental work performed across federal agencies. Developed and implemented policy and procedure documents, an implementation strategy and toolbox, and performed outreach and training,
- Developed the EPA New England Quality System and its documented Quality Management Plan,
- Produced an innovative Compendium of Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Guidance and provided training to 275 federal, state, and contractor personnel, resulting in cost and time savings due to decreased rework of QAPPs,
- Worked collaboratively with State Commissioners and EPA State Directors to incorporate quality assurance requirements into their Performance Partnership Agreements,
- Constructed and implemented a working model for state-lead Superfund project management with the State of New Hampshire in support of their Performance Partnership Agreement,
- Received a Gold Medal for directing the scientific investigation, interpreting complex information, and effectively communicating with the public on the politically-sensitive Woonasquatucket River dioxin emergency response, and
- Received a Mentor of the Year Award for effectively mentoring cross-divisional staff.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, Lexington, MA

Superfund Contract Laboratory Program (CLP) Technical Project Officer, 6/87 to 9/97

Responsibilities: Program Manager for Superfund laboratory contracts totaling \$50 million. Provided technical advice to national and regional EPA managers and staff in the areas of project management, environmental analysis and data quality. Provided expert witness testimony for fraud investigations, criminal and civil litigation, and alternative dispute resolution to federal judges, grand juries, and arbitrators.

Accomplishments:

- Created over 30 regional policies, guidance documents, fact sheets, and technical specifications to improve data quality, contracts management, and decision-making.
- Designed and directed a national pilot study for EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response to evaluate options for decentralizing procurement of Superfund analytical services.
- Provided crucial expert witness and extensive case development with U.S. Department of Justice and EPA attorneys for Davis Liquid Superfund Site, and obtained multimillion dollar Responsible Party liability determination, and
- Received Gold Medal for developing laboratory fraud case with U.S. Attorney and EPA's Inspector General, and providing grand jury testimony that resulted in a plea bargain and \$500,000 paid in criminal liability and \$200,000 in civil liability.

Cambridge Analytical Associates, Brookline, MA**Co-Director, Superfund Environmental Consulting Department, 2/86 to 6/87**

Responsibilities: Supervisor of a diverse staff of 10 multi-disciplinary environmental engineers, scientists, and support personnel. Responsible for obtaining Superfund environmental consulting work to achieve corporate performance goals, and for leading all daily operations with direct control of operating budgets and financial performance.

Accomplishments: First subcontractor to perform Superfund data review for EPA Region 1. Provided litigation support under a sole source contract to EPA and the U.S. Department of Justice for Love Canal. Co-authored a chapter on laboratory methods for the Gas Research Institute Handbook.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, MA**Technical Associate, Chemistry Spectrometry Laboratory, 7/84 to 2/86**

Responsibilities: Managed the Mass Spectrometry Laboratory. Responsible for analyzing research samples for Chemistry Department faculty and staff using innovative analytical techniques.

Accomplishments: Independently learned highly specialized techniques. Advised MIT faculty regarding research options and results.

EPA Work Group Leadership and Participation

Served as Agency Representative or Chair on more than 40 policy-setting intergovernmental, national and regional workgroups, boards, and steering committees. Examples include:

EPA Executive Resources Board (2011 - present)

Serves on the EPA Executive Resources Board. The Board reviews and makes appropriate recommendations to the EPA Administrator on performance ratings, shares/pay adjustments, bonus nominations, and requests for Higher Level Review of SES members' performance ratings. Term expires December 2013.

Caribbean Science Consortium (2011 – present)

Created and manages the Caribbean Science Consortium to address critical public health issues in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in environmental justice areas by coordinating and leveraging the participating organizations' limited resources.

Science and Technology Policy Council (2008 - present)

Represents Region 2 on the Science and Technology Policy Council (STPC). The STPC serves as a mechanism for addressing EPA's many significant science policy issues that go beyond regional and

program boundaries.

Forum on Environmental Measurements (2008 - present)

Represents Region 2 on the Forum on Environmental Measurements. Provides insight into the scientific needs of the Agency, and develops programs, processes and procedures to meet those needs.

EPA Liaison to The NELAC Institute's Board of Directors (2008 – 2010)

Served as the EPA Liaison to The National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Council Institute's Board of Directors and provided insight into the mission, goals and objectives, and needs of the Agency with regard to national accreditation of field and laboratory measurements.

EPA Region 2 Labor Management Partnership Council (2002 - 2008)

Served as a Management Representative to the Labor Management Partnership Council and co-chaired the Mini-Details Work Group. Developed and implemented a Mini-Details Program for employees to obtain short-term experience in other programs to enhance career development and facilitate succession management.

EPA Region 2 Emergency Laboratory Network (2002 - 2008)

Created an Emergency Laboratory Network to leverage the capability and capacity of the Region and its State partners to respond to a terrorist event or natural disaster; developed a Drinking Water Emergency Laboratory Response Plan; and implemented a Table Top Exercise and a Functional Exercise to maintain readiness of network partners.

EPA Region 2 Organizational Change Work Group (2002 - 2003)

Served on the Organizational Change Work Group, which developed a process and strategy for achieving 4 broad organizational goals: improving communication, increasing cooperative efforts, creating an empowered and innovative work environment, and establishing a succession management program.

OSWER Intergovernmental Data Quality Task Force (1997 - 2002)

Represented EPA as a consensus member with the U.S. Departments of Defense, Energy and the Interior to standardize Superfund data quality requirements across federal agencies. Developed and implemented policy and procedure documents, an implementation strategy and toolbox, and performed outreach and training.

Awards

Received 37 national and regional performance awards for leadership, management, and innovation during 26 year tenure with EPA, including:

- 2 SES Bonuses
- 1 SES Superior Accomplishment Award
- 2 Gold Medals for Exceptional Service
- 4 Bronze Medals for Commendable Service
- 1 Mentor of the Year Award
- 5 Quality Step Increases
- 1 Sustained Superior Performance Award
- 6 Superior Accomplishment Recognition Awards
- 4 Special Act or Service Awards
- 4 Performance Management Recognition System Awards

- 1 Regional Administrator's Recognition Award
- 1 Regional Administrator's Team Award
- 1 Office Award
- 2 On the Spot Awards
- 2 Time Off Awards

Education

Northeastern University, Boston, MA
Graduate courses in Chemistry, 1985-1986

Northeastern University, Boston, MA
B.S., Biology, 1983
Magna Cum Laude, 3.7 GPA
Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society
Phi Sigma Biological Honor Society